

21. (Currently Amended) A method for managing health care-related information about a patient as electronic records over a communications network comprising:

- electronically handling the records as a plurality of component fields, each component field associated with a particular type of patient data associated with the patient;
- determining access rules to selectively govern access to the component fields by both health care providers and non health care providers, the access rules determined by the patient;
- applying the access rules before the component fields are accessed;
- providing access based on the access rules to a first predetermined amountgroup of the component fields of the records when a first access parameter is present, the first access parameter relating to desired access by a first group of individuals, the providing access based on the access rules to the first predetermined group of the component fields including providing access to the first group of individuals, the first predetermined group of the component fields relating to a first medical condition of the patient; and
- providing access based on the access rules to a second predetermined amountgroup of the component fields of the records when a second access parameter different from the first access parameter is present, the second predetermined amountgroup of the component fields not identical to the first predetermined amountgroup of the component fields, the second access parameter relating to desired access by a second group of individuals not identical to the first group of individuals, the providing access based on the access rules to the second predetermined group of the component fields including providing access to the second group of individuals, the second predetermined group of the component fields relating to a second medical condition of the patient; and
- completely denying to the second group of individuals access to at least a portion of the first predetermined group of the component fields of the records when the second access parameter is present.

22. (Canceled – incorporated into Claim 21) The method of Claim 21 wherein:

- the first access parameter relates to desired access by a first group of individuals;

~~the second access parameter relates to desired access by a second group of individuals not identical to the first group of individuals;~~

~~the providing access to the first predetermined amount of the component fields includes providing access to the first group of individuals, the first predetermined amount relating to a first medical condition of the patient; and~~

~~the providing access to the second predetermined amount of the component fields includes providing access to the second group of individuals, the second predetermined amount relating to a second medical condition of the patient.~~

23. (Original) The method of Claim 21 wherein the determining access rules includes considering a role of a person desiring access, the method further comprising evaluating a login identifier associated with the person, the login identifier associated with the role of the person.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 21 wherein:

the determining access rules includes considering a role of a person desiring access;

the first group of individuals includes access parameter relates to desired access by a first health care provider having a first role;

the second group of individuals includes a second health care provider having a second role not identical to the first role; and

the first predetermined amountgroup of the component fields is not all of the component fields and the second predetermined group of the component fields is not all of the component fields; and

the first predetermined group of the component fields is not identical to the second predetermined group of the component fields.

25. (Canceled) ~~The method of Claim 24 wherein the second access parameter relates to desired access by a billing or accounting personnel and wherein the second predetermined amount of the component fields is a fraction of all of the component fields.~~

26. (Canceled) ~~The method of Claim 25 wherein the component fields include patient welfare component fields relating to information about health of the patient, the method further comprising denying the billing or accounting personnel access to the patient welfare component fields.~~

27. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 21 wherein:

~~the determining access rules includes considering a role of a person desiring access;~~
~~the second group of individuals includes access parameter relates to desired access by a~~
personal relation who is not a medical care provider of the patient; and
~~the second predetermined amount~~group of the component fields is a fraction of all of the
component fields.

28. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 21 wherein:

~~the first access parameter relates to desired access by a first group of individuals;~~
~~the second access parameter relates to desired access by a second group of individuals~~
not identical to the first group of individuals;
~~the providing access to the first predetermined amount of the component fields includes~~
providing access to the first group of individuals, the ~~second~~first predetermined amountgroup of
component fields is indicative of good health of the patient; and
~~the providing access to the second predetermined amount of the component fields~~
includes providing access to the second group of individuals and denying access to the first
group of individuals, the ~~first~~second predetermined amountgroup of component fields is indicative
of bad health of the patient.

29. (Canceled) The method of Claim 21 wherein:

~~the first access parameter relates to desired access by a first group of individuals;~~
~~the second access parameter relates to desired access by a second group of individuals~~
not identical to the first group of individuals;
~~the providing access to the first predetermined amount of the component fields includes~~
providing access to the first group of individuals, the first predetermined amount satisfying a first
criterion about monetary amounts owed by the patient; and
~~the providing access to the second predetermined amount of the component fields~~
includes providing access to the second group of individuals, the second predetermined amount
satisfying a second criterion about monetary amounts owed by the patient.

30. (Original) The method of Claim 21 wherein the determining access rules includes:

associating with one of the component fields permitted transactions selected from the group consisting of create, display, modify, and transmit, or any combination thereof;

associating with the one component field unpermitted transactions selected from the group consisting of create, display, modify, and transmit, or any combination thereof; and

restricting manipulation of the one component field to only the permitted transactions.

31. (Currently Amended – Incorporates prior Claims 38, 39) The method of Claim 21 ~~30~~ wherein the determining access rules includes considering a role of a person desiring access further comprising:

selectively organizing the records or component fields thereof according to selectable parameters based at least in portion upon the particular types of patient data; and

compiling the organized records or component fields thereof into an electronic file history that is storable in the electronic database for later access.

32. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 21 wherein the determining access rules includes allowing the patient to determine a portion of the access rules the first group of individuals includes health care providers and the second group of individuals includes health care providers not included in the first group of individuals.

33. (Currently Amended) A method for handling health care-related records of a patient comprising:

enabling an electronic database to store the records;

defining a threshold event relating to both medical/physiological and nonmedical/nonphysiological data about the patient, the threshold event defined by the patient;

programming the database or an associated computer with the threshold event;

analyzing the records stored in the database to determine if the threshold event has occurred; and

using the database or the associated computer to automatically provide an electronic notification, that is not an offer to have medical services performed, to ana non health care provider selected by the patient interested entity upon occurrence of the threshold event as defined by the patient.

34. (Original) The method of Claim 33 wherein the records contain information received from various communications devices coupled to the database or the associated computer.

35. (Original) The method of Claim 33 wherein the threshold event relates to monetary amounts owed by the patient to a health care provider and wherein the electronic notification includes a request to make payments to the health care provider after services are performed.

36. (Original) The method of Claim 35 wherein the interested entity is the patient.

37. (Original) The method of Claim 33 wherein:

the threshold event relates to receipt by the database of an anticipated record;

the interested entity is a personal relation of the patient; and

the electronic notification includes at least a portion of the record.

38. (Currently Amended/New – like Claim 21) ~~A method for managing patient health care related information comprising:~~

~~configuring an electronic database to maintain the information as records;~~

~~handling the records as a plurality of component fields, the component fields associated with particular types of patient data; and~~

~~selectively organizing the records or component fields thereof according to selectable parameters based at least in portion upon the particular types of patient data.~~

A method for managing health care-related information about a patient as electronic records over a communications network comprising:

electronically handling the records as a plurality of component fields, each component field associated with a particular type of patient data associated with the patient;

determining access rules to selectively govern access to the component fields, the access rules determined at least in part by the patient;

applying the access rules before the component fields are accessed;

providing based on the access rules for a first group of individuals access to a first set of component fields of the records when a first access parameter is present, the first access parameter relating to desired access by the first group of individuals, the first set of component fields relating to a first condition of the patient;

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providing based on the access rules for a second group of individuals not identical to the first group of individuals access to a second set of component fields of the records when a second access parameter not identical to the first access parameter is present, the second set of component fields not identical to the first set of component fields, the second access parameter relating to desired access by the second group of individuals, the second set of component fields relating to a second condition of the patient; and

denying to the second group of individuals access to at least a portion of the first set of component fields of the records.

39. (Currently Amended/New) The method of Claim 38 further comprising compiling the organized records or component fields thereof into an electronic file history that is storable in the electronic database for later access. The method of Claim 38 wherein the second condition relates to non-medical information about the patient.

40. (Currently Amended/New) The method of Claim 38 wherein one of the selectable parameters concerns patient billing related data. The method of Claim 38 wherein the second group of individuals includes billing or accounting personnel and wherein the second set of component fields relates to financial information about the patient.

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41. (Currently Amended/New) The method of Claim 40 wherein the first set of component fields includes information about medical health of the patient, the method further comprising denying the billing or accounting personnel access to any portion of the first set of component fields.

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42. (Currently Amended/New) The method of Claim 38 wherein:
the first set of component fields satisfies a first criterion about monetary amounts owed by the patient; and
the second set of component fields satisfies a second criterion about monetary amounts owed by the patient.

43. (Currently Amended/New) The method of Claim 42 wherein:
the first group of individuals includes billing or accounting personnel; and
the second group of individuals includes personal relations of the patient.

44. (Currently Amended/New) The method of Claim 38 wherein:

the first set of component fields satisfies a first criterion about monetary amounts owed
by the patient;

the second set of component fields relates to medical health of the patient.

the first group of individuals includes billing or accounting personnel; and

the second group of individuals includes health care providers.